



## Official Water Race & Field Trial Rules of the American Coon Hunters Association (revised 8/24 GSM)

### CLUB RESPONSIBILITIES:

- 1) Club shall appoint an Event Chairperson to oversee the event; to include entry taking, assigning judges and filing event paperwork.
- 2) Club shall have a suitable starting point to allow all dogs to start at the same time.
- 3) All dogs, owners and handlers at the starting line are in charge of the Judge. The Judge must explain their system of starting so that each owner handler is familiar with it.
- 4)
  - a) All dogs must start from a starting box or line designed so that all dogs will be released at the same time.
  - b) Dogs must pass between stakes that have been set at the water's edge and approximately 30 feet apart.  
Dogs failing to pass between the stakes will be disqualified.
- 5)
  - a) Dogs will be released simultaneously as directed and controlled by a signal from the Starting Judge.
  - b) Any dog released before the starting signal will be disqualified.
  - c) Dogs are not to be encouraged by their handlers after release.
- 6)
  - a) A line will have been previously placed across the pond near the end and close to the shore.
  - b) The first swimming dog (KEY WORDS: SWIMMING DOGS) to cross under this line will be declared the Line Winner.
- 7)
  - a) Dogs must swim (KEY WORDS: MUST SWIM) free and clear of the side boundary markers for the entire length of the pond to qualify for a Line or Tree decision.
  - b) Dogs can run out of the circle and return but must bark enough to satisfy the three Tree Judges to be declared a Tree Winner.
- 8) Club should have a minimum of 2 Line Judges and 3 Tree Judges. If line is close enough to the tree, judges can double as both line and tree judge.
- 9) **Water Race:** Club shall ensure water is deep enough for dogs to swim. Dogs must not be able to touch bottom with the exception of the starting and exit points.
- 10) Club should draw a 15-foot radius (30-foot diameter circle) around the base of the home tree.
- 11) Club should have a well-marked position to establish first line.
- 12) Coon scent, coon hide/carcass or live coon shall be used in accordance with state laws.

### EVENT RULES:

- 1) All dogs entered must be ACHA registered.
- 2) All dogs entered will be randomly drawn into 3-dog heats.
- 3) No more than 3 dogs to a race at any time.

The logo for the American Coon Hunters Association features the text "American Coon Hunters Association" in a blue, serif font. On either side of the word "Coon" is a circular emblem containing a coon's head and the letters "ACHA".

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- 4) If an odd number of dogs are entered, refer to the night hunt draw out procedure.  
(For example: If 5 dogs are entered, there will be a 3-dog heat and a 2-dog heat.)
- 5) All dogs will be drawn by title – (*Open vs. Open, Champion vs. Champion, etc.*)

## **TITLES:**

- 1) Dogs must win 5 first line and 5 first trees and have a Mandatory first line and first tree with competition to achieve the title of Water Champion or Field Champion.
- 2) Water Champions or Field Champions must win 5 first lines and 5 first trees in elimination heats and 1 final first line and first tree to become Grand Water Champion or Grand Field Champion.
- 3) Grand Water or Field Champions must win 5 first lines and 5 first trees in elimination heats and 3 final first lines and trees with competition to become Supreme Water Champion or Supreme Field Champion.
- 4) At the club level each heat will have a first line and first tree.
- 5) In a World Championship, there will be eliminations to the finals with one World Champion.